407 472 474 Many of the large tractor plowing concerns described above are run by two or more men, often brothers, in partnership. A much more recent development of this kind has been the 'tractor co-operative' in which a much larger number of farmers share the use and expenses of a cultivator of tractor. By the end of 1958 one such co-operative had been established in Mellieha in Malta, and another at Gharb, in Gozo.

407 474 648 These two projects are attempts which, if successful, may be followed by the setting up of other similar co-operatives. Two powerful hand cultivators were donated by C.A.R.E[27], the American relief organization, to a committee of farmers in Mellieha and two more to a similar group in Gharb. In each village farmers wishing to join [427] the co-operative paid a fee of some £2 after which they were entitled to hire the machine at a fraction of the prevailing commercial hire cost. In Gharb this was 10/- an hour where other private tractor operators were demanding 17/-. The C.A.R.E. gifts of tractors removed the need for the farmer himself to invest capital in something novel. He stood only to gain and not to lose and there was, consequently, fierce competition for the limited membership of the co-operative. Maintainance of the machines was in each case left to a full-time operator, while the running of the co-operative was in the hands of an executive committee of some half dozen farmers in each case who were elected from among the members concerned. This kind of organization in farm work is quite new to the Maltese farmer who has previously been incapable of uniting to any degree, whether in a marketing co-operative or farmers' union (Section 4). If the Mellieha and Gharb projects prove successful the principle of such co-operation may well extend to other branches of agriculture. The resulting financial economies would considerably strengthen the farmer's position.

407 474 A co-operative of any sort is, however, a somewhat unknown quantity among a largely illiterate and conservative farming population not far removed from traditional independent subsistence. Moreover, until recently, mechanical skill has been confined to the small number of farmers operating tractors themselves. In the Gharb co-operative only two men were available who could in fact operate the machines at all.

Although it is too early to judge the efficacy of this kind of co-operative in Malta its initial success would suggest that it has a future. The answer to the problem of shortage of labour discussed earlier in this section may then well be a combination of the widespread owner-use of one or other of the small rotary cultivators on the market along

178 434 241 because he has always been used to doing it and one which enables him to provide many of the food items needed by the family. Moreover he feels that his sons, who emigrated some years ago, will eventually wish to return to Malta and will be still enough attracted to the way of life which bred them to want to cultivate a small piece of land themselves during their retirement.

For this man, therefore, farming lacks the character of the bitter struggle with debt which it has for (a). To this extent he is typical of the large and growing number of part-time farmers in Malta today whose livelihood is provided by their non-agricultural job but who maintain a sort of residual interest in the land both as the source of 'extras' and as a link with the farming community from which they are but one generation, or less, removed.

156 241 426 The link with the land, mentioned under (d), gives both the full- and the part-time farmer a sense of independence to which he clings despite the inadequacies of farming from the economic point of view. This sense of independence is revealed in cases where the farmer is not prepared to consider taking a loan, even from the Government at only 1% interest, partly because, as he says, he is "not used to it", but rather perhaps because the variable fortunes of farming (crop failure, storm damage, market fluctuations, etc.) might make him unable to continue payment of the interest on the loan. He wants to be beholden to no-one. Even the house in which he lives was bought by him from his own savings without the help of loans (d).

THE FAMILY BUDGET

472 511 It appears that MONEY is a variable but important factor in the operation of the modern Maltese farm as an economic or uneconomic unit. Money within the household, as distinct from the farm, merits further consideration.

As already suggested, there is generally no clear distinction made by the farmer between the finances pertaining to his farm and those of his family and its maintainance. The most common practice is for there to be "one purse" (Cases VI and X). Into this go all profits from sale of produce or livestock and out of it come the costs of running farm and household. As seen, the farm unit itself is not run with a budget in most cases and there is rarely any attempt on the part of the farmer to cost-account the working of his farm as far as the labour of his family and himself is concerned [45] (Case X). Similarly it is still the exception rather than the rule to find a herdsman who keeps cost accounts of his milk production. In many cases he knows he is making a loss, though of the details he has no notion. In carrying on his farming under these conditions he seems

472 to be suffering from a mixture of inertia and pure inability
571 to organize the accounts of his business. In some cases he
[65] is compelled to put forward an outline statement for income
[157] tax assessment but generally his illiteracy and suspicion makes him unwilling to trust other individuals with details of his income and expenditure.

571 Within the family, however, this suspicion does not
454 normally exist. In fact the housewife tends to have full
[593] call on the contents of the "one purse" although in only a few cases was it found that she was making any detailed attempt at budgeting for the expenses of her home and family. As with the operation of the farm so with the home, the money is dispensed as demanded but all the time the instinct to save, observed by the 1911 Royal Commissioners (B/186), is there. The traditional peasant idea is
[178] that a large hoard of money or valuables will serve as an insurance when the expected depression arrives. Despite the opinion of the 1911 Commissioners, the notion that the saved capital would be better invested, possibly in capital equipment, is only now spreading to a considerable part of the farming community of the Islands.

511 In the day-to-day expenses of the traditional Maltese
437 village household, barter played a considerable part.
178 Today instances of it are rare and money is the fully accepted medium of exchange. As already indicated the Maltese farmer is not so far removed from his peasant past as may at first sight appear to be the case and one of the basic aims of his farming is still the provision of food
[433] for his family. The average farm in Malta, whatever its basis (stock, dairying or field produce), usually strives
[294] to produce as much of the food needs of the family as possible, though the provision of the family's clothing, as in the past when home-grown cotton was spun and woven to make clothes for the members of the grower's family. is no longer attempted.

262 Thus the food bought in by the farmer's wife include
438 the 'new' items of diet which cannot be grown on the home farm: preserves, processed cheeses, spaghetti and farinaceous pasta, processed meats, tea, coffee, and evaporated milk (inordinately popular throughout the Islands).
[656] Flour rationing since the early part of the 1939-45 War has killed bread making as a home industry. Meat, except for
[433] rabbit, fowl and small birds, has to be purchased, as all slaughtering is Government-controlled. The farmer does aim to produce the basic vegetables - potatoes, beans, peas, pumpkins, melons, tomatoes, onions, garlic, artichokes, endives, celery, cucumber, carrots, and fruits - oranges, apples, lemons, figs, peaches, etc., required by the family.

159 - Has a higher opinion of his ability as a stock farmer than facts warrant.
156 - Aims to build up cattle herd in place of goats since he assumes (with no factual background) that profit will be greater.
[231] - Much influenced by personalities and is willing to accept advice uncritically if the person giving it is, in his opinion, sound.
- Lacks educational background and experience necessary to make a real profit from his herd, but seems content with present living conditions.

CASE VIII : Niklaws (A working partnership of five brothers with diversified production)

159
472 Niklaws is the primus inter pares in a permanent par-
[423] tnership of five brothers. The syndicate farms some 70
[234] tmion and, in February, 1957, had a herd of thirty cattle. There is some division of labour among the five, with one being acknowledged the expert on cattle, another "knows most about the fields", and a third the driver and general business manager. Both their father, who died in 1915, and their grandfather were farmers but the brothers have considerably added to the holding.

159 The emphasis of the partnership is now heavily on cows'
472 milk production. They retain only two goats. With about
234 20 cows in milk they aim to produce some 50 gallons a day
433 - Niklaws observes that the yield from cows can be maintained while that of goats fluctuates markedly with the seasons. Costs of cows' milk production are also steadier, says
[232] Niklaws, with fresh greenery in the winter and prickly pear in the summer months as supplements to the standard items of diet. The fodder produced on the brothers' own fields has to be supplemented by purchased feed but judicious use is made of vegetables in glut, especially cauliflowers which could be bought by the farmer at 1s per sack in early 1957.

159 Mechanization on the farm includes the hiring of a
407 mould-board and tractor to deep-plow the land every fourth
454 year (cost - £1 per tomna), and the hiring of a threshing
234 machine. The brothers themselves own two hand cultivators
[427] and a small van, complete with the partnership insignia on the door. Currently much capital is being put into building a large, two-storey cows' shed within the village. The brothers aim to centralise their milk herd here and plan to have an adjacent exercise yard and water tank. At present their animals are divided among three widely separated byres, although all of these are easily accessible by road - and
[435] the van. One of the existing sheds was built between 1949 and 1952 at a cost of "£3,000". On the costs of the present building Niklaws will divulge nothing. His attitude suggests that the money is coming from saved reserves rather than a loan, for he appears reluctant to borrow money even on low interest terms "because anything might happen to prevent the money being repaid."

the money being repaid." Niklaws observes that "Farming depends on nature" and he points to the storms of late 1957 as an example of the way in which the farmer may suffer irreparable and unexpected loss. On this occasion standing crops, soil and field walls were washed away and the whole planting and sowing cycle interrupted.

The brothers also complain of the present marketing regime which, they claim, militates unfairly against the producing farmer. "There is no guaranteed market for field crops sold and there are too many middlemen taking too large a cut." The brothers cling to the typical idea in Maltese farming that the 'Government ought to guarantee sales of field-produce in the same way that milk sales are guaranteed'. They have little appreciation of ruling market conditions outside Malta. Niklaws says that the labour of the brothers is not considered as a cost - "if it were there would be no money left". They appear to have been in the habit of employing labour for many years and today have a full-time cow-hand. Only one of the brothers is married. Four of the brothers have therefore only themselves to support on their share in the income from this well-organized and apparently remunerative partnership, situated in one of the best dry-farming regions of Malta.

CASE VIII : Summary.

(Working partnership of five brothers with diversified production.)

A. Land.

c.70 tmien of unirrigated land in Żebbuġ Region. 16 field plots in 11 parcels in a linear arrangement extending over 2½ miles in the Żebbuġ and Wied tal-Isqof areas. All land lies in one of the best dry-farming regions of Malta on good marled Xero-rendzina and Carbonate Raw Soils.

B. Utilisation. (i) Typical arrangement.

		Winter	Summer
Plot 1.	8½ tmien	Potatoes & Wheat	Tomatoes & Cauliflower
Plot 2.	1 tmien	Potatoes	Cattle exercise yard
Plot 3.	1½ tmien	Onions, Potatoes, Vines.	Legumes & Vines
Plot 4.	3 tmien	Potatoes & Vegetables.	Cauliflowers & Vegetables.
Plot 5.	2½ tmien	Sulla & Barley	Tomatoes
Plot 6.	1½ tmien	Cereals, Cauliflowers & Tomatoes	
Plot 7.	2 tmien	Wheat, Cauliflowers & Tomatoes	
Plot 8.	7½ tmien	Sulla	Cauliflowers & Tomatoes
		Cauliflowers, Wheat & Tomatoes	
Plot 9.	2 tmien	Vines	
Plot 10.	2½ tmien	Potatoes	Tomatoes & Cauliflower
Plot 11.	21 tmien	Vines (3½ tmien)	
		Barley	Sulla, Tomatoes
		Vetches	Fallow
Plot 12.	2½ tmien	Potatoes	Sulla
Plot 13.	1½ tmien	Wheat	Sulla, Vetches
Plot 14.	2½ tmien	Fallow, Melons, Tomatoes & Cauliflower	
Plot 15.	5½ tmien	Citrus Orchard	
		Tomatoes	
Plot 16.	1½ tmien	Cauliflower	Tomatoes

159 24 (ii) The intensive summer utilisation of the land for unirrigated summer vegetables is characteristic of this region. Tomatoes and brassicas are dominant. Vetches and beans are grown as catch-crops in small patches. This type of cropping sequence i.e. potatoes, vegetables, cereals, sulla, is typical of well-developed Maltese mixed-farming.

C. Livestock.

159 23 234 (i) c.33 head of cattle including 20-22 milch cows, 1 stud bull, 2 bull calves for fattening.
(ii) 2 goats, 1 mule, 1 pony, 12 hens.
(iii) The cattle-herd has been built up since 1940.

D. Capital.

159 [402] (i) The accepted leader of this partnership enterprise is typical of the more commercially minded and successful Maltese farmers in that he was prepared to discuss anything except financial details. The amount of capital of property and even the details of land-holding of this "kulak" class is known accurately by nobody.

[407] [343] [454] (ii) Equipment includes 1 van, 1 hand tractor, 2 water pumps and two large cattle byres. At local values, farm buildings and mechanised equipment represents over £8,000 investment.

[426] (iii) This partnership prefers to indulge in small-scale family borrowing and lending rather than to use official-and controlled- credit facilities.

[423] (iv) Two village houses and over 3 tmien of land are owned freehold.

E. Labour.

159 464 (i) Partnership labour force totals 6 full-time farm-workers (5 brothers and 1 adult son).
(ii) A youth employed full-time with cattle.

407 (iii) All plots are deep-plowed by crawler tractor every fourth year at cost of £1 per tomna.

427 (iv) On this relatively level land a varying fraction of cereal reaping is done by machine. Machine cutting costs £1 a tomna, hand harvesting £3 a tomna. Hand cutting is less wasteful of straw but these farmers have a rare appreciation of the importance of the time-element in their complex economic and land-use system.

F. Production and Sales.

159 433 (i) The only certain information obtainable is of sales of cows milk. During 1957 minimum daily sales averaged 283 lbs. during May, and the maximum of 350 lbs. during March was almost matched in August and the following January. This constancy of sales based on a firm intention to allow production to vary but slightly from an average of 30 gallons a day from 20 milch cows is rarely found in Malta and is typical only of a few technically advanced and commercially minded farmers.

159 43 (ii) The partnership although possessing a stud bull usually buys cows in milk (preferably Ayrshires), a 'good' yielder costing c.£210. Breeding and raising heifers if regarded as unprofitable.

(iii) The main sales of arable produce consist of summer cauliflowers and tomatoes. In an effort to avoid the usual glut of summer brassicas considerable importance is attached to extending the season of production into autumn and winter. Price variations are considerable e.g. In 1956 cauliflower prices dropped to 1/- a sack while in 1956 they had risen to 20/- a sack.

* K. General.

159 (i) In some of its characteristics this type of syndi-
472 cate is not typical of Maltese farming systems.
451 The partnership seems to derive historically from a line of large farmers and is now held together by the drive and ability of one of their number.

*159 (ii) Nevertheless if one ignores the partnership organ-
472 isation one may use this case-study as illustrating
451 the practises and modes of thought of the most
181 highly developed type of Maltese farmer.

- Characteristically there is a marked reluctance to give any financial information. Official records and returns are even less accurate than in the case of smaller-scale and more ignorant cultivators. Some records are certainly kept by the group but individual shares in gross income do not seem to be formally arranged. There does no seem even here to be either a monetary evaluation of their own labour or any assessment of net profit as distinct from gross income. Receipts appear to go into a central treasury which is drawn on by agreement over each specific case.
- Although there is present considerable financial acumen this is a matter of peasant shrewdness rather than any real commercial understanding.

*159 - Yields are good - tomatoes will average 15 qantar
433 per tomna, grapes 10 qantar per tomna, but these
181 are attained by the careful application of
242 proverbial wisdom and not by the possession of better scientific understanding than their neighbours.

*159 - In spite of the fact that the syndicate's
181 capital reserves and their practical abilities
232 are considerable, the physical environment dom-
242 inates their actions. They are not prepared to experiment themselves and they look askance at those who are. One has an unhappy feeling that as already noted, their very success with traditional methods inhibits their acceptance of new ones. Thus even with farmers such as these there is a great mental gulf between them and typical farmers of Northern Europe and between them and their advisers.

*159 CASE IX : Antnin & Ġakbu (A long-established
472 partnership of two unrelated stock farmers now engaged in
464 cows' milk production.)

Both these men are married and occupy houses in the same street. They have operated as a single farming unit during their whole working lives and it is not always clear whether even they can distinguish which property belongs to each. The teenage eldest sons of each man work full-time with their fathers whose wives occasionally assist with

* field-work.

159 Some few years ago the two friends had 36 goats. By
178 1958 only two remained and the emphasis had swung to cows'
234 milk production. In 1956 they had about 18 cows; eighteen months later the joint herd had doubled in size. Their aim has been to build up as large a herd as possible as quickly as possible in order to benefit from the guaranteed price offered by the M.M.U. for milk produced. The two men insist that they are at the same time striving to build up a

159 Their failure to profit contrasts with the success of the
154 Gozitan milk producer, Case I.
824 The partnership's main aim is to accumulate cattle with-
231 in the current artificial economy of milk production. There
251 is no thought or care for what might happen if the subsidy
[433] were removed or even reduced.

CASE X : Ġamri (An arable farmer in partnership with a brother and engaged in diversified production.)

*159 Ġamri is an arable farmer, specialising in fruit. He
24 has a couple of goats and sheep, a mule, and is keen to
23 acquire more pigs for fattening. Most of his effort is how-
427 ever centred on the land holding which he and his brother work
472 in partnership. Some fifty-three tmien are rented by the two brothers together while Ġamri himself rents a further ten tmien. About two-thirds of the land (17 plots) is owned by private landlords, one sixth belongs to the Church, one tenth to the Government and the remainder - about an acre - is owned by Ġamri's father.

*159 The working partnership of the two brothers is of many
402 years' standing. The brother's eldest son now works full-
464 time alongside the two men. The brothers say they could not
241 cope with any more land than they are working at present. They share the common view that hired farm labour is both uneconomic (at 25s or more for an eight-hour day) and inefficient. The land worked by the partnership is dry (baghli) apart from two irrigable (saqwi) tmien. In 1957 it was utilized as follows:

[311]

Fruit and vines	21 tmien
Cereals and fodders	18 tmien
Fallow, unproductive, or sub-let	13 tmien
Potatoes	6 tmien
Other vegetables	5 tmien

*159 Apples are the biggest single cash crop and the overall
245 success of any year depends on them. They were introduced
242 to the district by Ġamri's father some years ago and now grow in large numbers in a sheltered valley along with lemons, oranges, mulberries, figs, cherry-plums and other fruits. The produce is good but is usually affected by some pest or disease. The most prevalent of these is a boring grub. Ġamri and his brother spend a large part of September and October simply gouging this pest from the trunks of affected trees - with penknife and piece of wire. They regard this time-consuming and unremunerative task fatalistically. But of late Ġamri has been wondering whether the same result might not be achieved in a fraction of the time by the application of some spray. He knows nothing of the details of this and is more than a little doubtful of possibilities.

*159 Since 1953 Ġamri and his brother have expanded their
245 area under vines, buying seedlings from the Government Farm
[435] at 1d each. They consider vines the most profitable of crops, especially grapes for wine since these can be picked

*159 241 for January planting at 3-4 cwt. per tomna. Seed from crop used for sowing in following autumn.

(4) - Manure.

- Mixed urban refuse and animal manure plowed in to 12-18 inches.
- One field of 2 tmien received 1 truck load refuse and 30 sacks dry manure.
- One field of 1.5 tmien received 50 sacks of animal manure from G's stock.
- Vines receive c. ½ cwt. artificial fertiliser per tomna almost every year.
- Wheat receives from ½ to 1 cwt. artificial fertiliser per tomna per year, broadcast with the seed.

H. General.

*159 [402] [423] [464] [178]
- Partnership has prevented excessive fragmentation of father's land.
- Free exchange of labour allows G to maintain a relatively large holding despite the inability of his young children to assist him. If these children wish to continue in farming, pressure on land will result.
- G therefore encourages his children in their education with a view to emigration and/or employment outside farming.

[435] [451] [461] [157]
- G has no real idea of costing of his production. Can give details of income and expenditure, but makes no allowance for enormous application of labour (see E) necessary for very modest income (see F).
- Willing to undertake still more labour (e.g. in spraying fruit trees) to avoid cash expenditure.
- All this despite the fact that G is well above average in intelligence and standard of education.
- Conservative in techniques and attitudes but eager to invest in proven successes (e.g. extension of vines and apple orchards, development of pig-farming). However, markets may already be glutted.
- With clear, patient, reasoned and disinterested advice and encouragement, G could probably much improve his methods and yields to make his holding a more profitable enterprise.

*159 423 CASE XI : Pietru (An arable farmer mainly concerned with irrigated produce.)

The nucleus of Pietru's farm is a block of 14 irrigable tmien on which he spends the greater part of his time. His home is about a mile away in the village and he also holds a large number of patches of dry (baghli) land scattered over the northern part of Malta. The more outlying of these dry fields have tended to be neglected, or left to Pietru's wife and family to work, while he has concentrated on building up and developing his irrigable holding. His father bought four of these irrigable tmien after the 1914-18 War although at that time the area was covered with concrete. This was laboriously removed and irrigation channels ('canali') installed. Other adjacent patches were acquired as they became available - Pietru himself acquiring the latest addition in 1954. He had taken over from his father some years previously although he had started his working life as a mason.

*159 241 464 Today Pietru, his son, wife and daughters cultivate the 14 tmien very intensively. The suggestion of a pathway is rejected because "it would take up too much irrigable land".

181 24 809 read of successful experiments of one kind or another in a foreign land - he will only be satisfied with conclusive proof before his own eyes. Moreover the farmer often finds it hard to convince himself that some expert or high-ranking advisor on affairs agricultural can in fact be working for the benefit of the farmer and not himself. This is something new in his experience.

Mechanization.

*159 407 422 429 472 Ġanni and his brother work their machinery contracting business together, doing all but the biggest repairs. They have (1958):

(i) a three-furrow (previously a two-furrow) mould-board plow, the only one in the district,

(ii) a triple disc-plow (originally a double) for heavy ground,

(iii) a rotavator. Originally the brothers had a small rotavator but they complain that this does no more than kill off the weeds for a short time and harden the soil just below the rotavated surface. In 1958 they were buying a 5' trailer with 4 revolving claws which met with much derision from local farmers because of its weight.

(iv) a three-ton truck,

(v) a twelve-tined harrow,

They are keen to add (1958) a thresher and a small combine harvester which "might work in Malta with effect". Ġanni would rather "import a combine than let £1000 lie idle in the bank, unlike most other farmers". "New machinery soon pays for itself and is the way to make money in Maltese agriculture today". He advocates tyred tractors for Maltese conditions as they are easier to get out of rough ground and more convenient to cope with road transit. Many farmers prefer the caterpillar-tracked type (v. Case XV). He maintains that the tyred tractor is better even for the deep-plowing which he advocates. This deep-plowing has grown in popularity only slowly - Ġanni is fully aware that "there may be drawbacks", [465] but he reckons to work his four-month season each year to the full, earning about £5 per day on six days per week. The rest of the year is taken up with contract work with the machinery on building and other sites together with some attention to the few fields held by the family. The area covered by the brothers in their plowing operations extends to something like a quarter of the area of Malta (v. B/381).

*159 156 Ġanni and the village.

Ġanni is an outsider in his own village in so far as his literacy, travel and, especially, his Australian experience and his 'new ideas' have put him socially out of touch with his fellow-villagers. He maintains enough of a link with the village (through his father) to be able to live there and

*159 make money, but he has little sympathy for the older people
156 around him and they in their turn regard him as a social (as
well as economic) rebel. He takes little part in the social
461 life of the village. Work is his first concern and he is
626 most annoyed when the priest, with whom he has "not been on
517 speaking terms" since his return from Australia, forbids
his working on Sundays. This includes even repair work on
493 the machinery indoors. He knows well enough that were he
to plow on Sundays or fests days he would be "publically
ostracized and no villager would hire him and his plow".
His relaxation is his motor-cycle on which he escapes at
high speed from time to time along with others of his gener-
ation who "have eyes for the lights of Valletta rather than
farming".

*159 Towards his own parents Ġanni's attitude is typical.
156 He regards his father as belonging to the old generation of
593 illiterate or semi-literate countryfolk, steeped in the con-
servatism of the past and the traditional. Father and son
argue continuously over points of policy - with Ġanni tending
to assume that his education and wider experience entitles
him to something of a 'casting vote' in such arguments.
Nevertheless the family tie is there and is strong enough
for Ġanni to have an innate respect for his father despite
the gulf in education and ideas. Thus Ġanni supported his
father's scheme to plant some cotton even though he himself
doubted the profitability of this move (1958).

*159 Marriage in Malta, where the "evil dowry" ('data')
156 system is maintained, holds little attraction for Ġanni.
[583] He observes that he cannot take a girl out on his motor-cycle
without the older people of the village criticising him for
not marrying her first. This and the whole social climate
of village life in Malta of which it is part clashes with the
ways he learned in Australia and with the ideas and beliefs
which his education and his knowledge of the world outside
the village of his birth have brought him.

Ġanni is primarily important to the village because he
is staying there. He takes little part in village affairs,
he does not "bother about festas", and he has few close
[178] friends in his age group of farmers. But his ideas and the
new methods and implements which he has brought to the
village in face of considerable opposition and ridicule are
a significant item in the changing scene of Maltese farming.

CASE XV

*159 Three brothers work together as a team. Their father
472 works the land full-time and the brothers join him when their
407 joint tractor-hire business is not claiming their attention.
Their mechanical activities began some twenty-two years ago
and now extend over more than a sixth of the area of Malta.
000 They appear to have been among the first in the tractor

They appear to have been among the first in the tractor 139.
'business' and note that when they started there were only some half dozen large tractors already in use in Malta.

When the original tractor was imported along with a trailing plow it was found very difficult to negotiate the tortuous Maltese country tracks. They have since shortened the fitment and adapted it for carriage high above the ground in transit. Unlike CASE XIV these brothers maintain that the 'crawling' type of tractor is better suited to Maltese conditions than is the wheeled as it can cope more easily with rough ground and with mud.

Although they have no competitors in the immediate vicinity, they complain that:

(i) The introduction of the small hand rotary cultivator in recent years has caused a set-back in their business. It is clearly a less unwieldy implement for many small or narrow fields than is the large tractor and one which is cheap enough for a farmer to purchase fairly easily. However the brothers have increased the variety of special fitments which they can operate with their tractors and have thus to some extent retained their business.

(ii) There are at present too many large tractors for the work available. The brothers would be pleased if several of them would go out of business.

CASE XVI

Two brothers have three wheeled tractors, a threshing machine and two rotary cultivators. Holding only some three acres of land themselves they depend primarily on their tractor-hire business which they began, with a single tractor, shortly before the 1939-45 War. At present business is declining for the reasons mentioned in CASE XV. One of the brothers insists that the Government should prohibit the import of any more tractors into the Island in an effort to reduce the competition. As for rotary cultivators they observe that these implements can be used almost all the year round and are better suited for general cultivation work than is the tractor-drawn deep plow.

CASE XVII

A plowman with two large tractors (both 'caterpillar' tracked and one converted into a bulldozer), this Case illustrates some further points. He acquired his first machine early in the 1939-45 War and has built up his business so successfully that he now farms only a single acre himself relying for his income on the profits of the short plowing season and on his contract work throughout the year with his bull-dozer. His area of operation stretches from St. Paul's Bay in the north of Malta to Benghajsa in the extreme south, where he works for at least two full weeks per year. He also hires his threshing machine in widely scattered parts of the Island. This occupies him for some two months each summer.

His major complaints are (i) the high price of diesel oil, and (ii) the fact that tractor operators are forbidden by law to drive their machines on public highways. On the question of 'over-lap' between contractors he wants the Government to delimate areas of operation for each man, an impracticable suggestion which would, he imagines, remove the necessity for his having to seek work at great distances from his village. His attitude on this point contrasts with his desire to import a new threshing machine as soon as possible.

CASE XVIII

In this case, a farmer works his tractor-hire business in conjunction with a friend. He bought a Chalmers tractor shortly before 1939 and has recently acquired a second machine - an Olivier. The area which he and his partner work with their tractors and 14" plow has become more limited of late on account of the increased use of rotary cultivators, especially as these are often user-owned.

159 He insists that the Government should stop imports of new machines in face of the present decline in the demand for contract deep-plowing. He sees himself and many farmer-contractors like him going out of business in the near future.

CASE XII

This farmer (working 35 tmian, including seven irrigable) was among the first to acquire machinery in the 1930's. He [178] speaks of the slow start made in deep-plowing on account of the suspicion of most farmers who continued to use the mule or horse-drawn wooden plow exclusively for some years. Mechanised plowing is now fully accepted, he says, and, for the contracting plowman, is still a most profitable venture despite the present fierce competition for business.

CASE XI

154 Whereas CASE XIV-XIX have concerned plowing and threshing contractors whose own fields are of secondary importance as a source of income, this man is typical of the growing number of farmers who see mechanization as the means whereby they themselves can cultivate a large holding. With his single tractor he cultivates some 35 tmian single handed and supplements his income from this holding by only a limited amount of contract-plowing in the summer season.

[245] He notes that a further reason for the decline in demand [178] for the deep-plow on contract is the recent increase in the area under vines (due to the steady demand for wine-grapes by local vintners).

CASE XXI

154 This Gozitan is a part-time contract plowman whose main occupation is not farming but baking. His father was a salt-seller but this business went to a brother shortly before the 1939-45 War whereupon this man decided to go in for full-time contract plowing and threshing. For many years he remained the sole such operator in his village and business grew. However in the present decade competition from new tractor operators has "halved the work available in the summer plowing season" for his plows and threshing machine. This prompted [477] him to build a bakery in 1954 to which he has since devoted all his time. However the tractor and threshing machine are still retained and are worked by a son as the demand arises.

CASE XXII

159 Another Gozitan, this English-speaking and astute man is not himself a contract plowman but is a dealer and agent for tractors, rotary cultivators and other agricultural machinery. His father began the import of tractors to the Island, but those were wheeled and soon found to be unsatisfactory for local conditions. The first 'crawling' tractor was introduced in 1939 and has since been found to be well suited to [191] the steep paths and fields and the small plots in Gozo, especially in wet weather. Since 1951 the use of rotary cultivators has spread rapidly through the Island and has led to a sharp decline in the work available to the deep-plowing tractors. Of twelve of the latter at present in the Island some three or four are normally unused in the season. This agent sparks of an agreement among the tractor operators of Gozo to limit individual spheres of operation during the 1957 plowing season.

[178] Like CASE XIV this man has been prepared to introduce new implements. His father was the first to import motor pumps (1920), while he himself brought in the first cultivator in 1951. His latest idea has been the import of harvesting machines, but the very limited success of the first ten which he brought in has discouraged him from buying any more. He observes that the fields of Gozo are too small for mechanization on this scale and that the harvester leaves a lot of straw in the ground which the farmer insists must be collected for animal fodder.